

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:**

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Process for increasing the molecular weight of a polyamide via solid-state post-condensation by exposing the polyamide prepolymer in the solid-state at elevated temperature to an inert gas atmosphere, wherein characterized in that the process comprises a step (a) wherein the gas atmosphere to which the polyamide is exposed has a dew temperature  $T_{\text{dew-1}}$  followed by a step (b) wherein the gas atmosphere to which the polyamide is exposed has a dew temperature  $T_{\text{dew-2}}$ , whereby  $T_{\text{dew-1}}$  is higher than  $T_{\text{dew-2}}$ , and wherein at the end of step (a), the polyamide has an intermediate-viscosity corresponding with a viscosity number  $VN_{\text{int}}$  and at the end of step (b) the polyamide polymer has an end-viscosity corresponding with a viscosity number  $VN_{\text{end}}$ , whereby  $VN_{\text{int}}$  is at most 90% of  $VN_{\text{end}}$ , measured according to ISO 307.
2. (Original) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the polyamide is polyamide-6 or polyamide-12.
3. (Original) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the polyamide has a melting temperature of at least 260°C.
4. (Original) Process according to Claim 3, wherein the polyamide is chosen from the group consisting of polyamide-4.6, copolymers thereof, polyamide-6.6 and copolymers thereof.
5. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, wherein  $T_{\text{dew-1}}$  is at least 10°C higher than  $T_{\text{dew-2}}$ .
6. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, wherein  $T_{\text{dew-2}}$  is at most 20°C.

7. (Previously Presented) Process according to Claim 1, wherein  ~~$T_{\text{dew-2}} = T_{\text{dew-1}}$~~   $T_{\text{dew-1}}$  is at least 30°C.

8. (Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the gas atmospheres of step (a) and step (b) have a temperature between 20°C and 100°C ~~BELOW~~ below the melting temperature of the polyamide polymer.

9. (Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the gas atmosphere of step (a) has a temperature  ~~$T_{\text{gas-1}}$~~   $T_{\text{gas-1}}$  and the gas atmosphere in step (b) has a temperature  ~~$T_{\text{gas-2}}$~~   $T_{\text{gas-2}}$ , whereby  ~~$T_{\text{gas-1}}$~~   $T_{\text{gas-1}}$  is at least 10°C higher than  ~~$T_{\text{gas-2}}$~~   $T_{\text{gas-2}}$ .

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the polyamide has an initial- viscosity number  ~~$VN_0$~~   $VN_0$  of at most 100 ~~ML/G~~ ml/g.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein step (b) is started after the polyamide in step (a) has obtained an intermediate-viscosity corresponding with a viscosity number  ~~$VN_{\text{int}}$~~   $VN_{\text{int}}$  of at least 70 ml/g, measured according to ISO 307.

13. (Currently Amended) Process according to Claim 1, wherein the polyamide comprises ~~at least one additive chosen from a~~ at least one additive chosen from the group comprising consisting of fillers, reinforcing agents, flame retardants, colorants and stabilizers.